

Message Text

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20

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 DPW-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 IO-12 SR-02 ORM-03 /099 W
----- 045856

P R 120215 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1575

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

MACTHAI PAO BANGKOK

CINCPAC CAMP SMITH HI FOR PAO

SECDEF WASHDC FOR ASD- PA

COMUSSAG NKP RTAFB THAI

CDR JCRC RTAFB THAI

DAO SAIGON SVN

CH US DEL FPJMT SAIGON SVN

USDEL JC PARIS

UNCLAS SAIGON 08379

E. O. 11652 N/ A

TAGS/ MOPS, VN

SUBJECT: PRESS RELEASE ON FPJMT HANOI VISIT MAY 11

THE FOLLOWING RELEASE WAS MADE BY EMBASSY PRESS OFFICER TO
WIRE SERVICES AT 2115 HOURS SAIGON TIME MAY 11, 1973:
BEGIN TEXT:

THE FOUR- PARTY JOINT MILITARY TEAM TRAVELED TO HANOI TODAY TO
VISIT THE GRAVES OF AMERICAN PERSONNEL WHO DIED WHILE IN CAPTIVITY
IN NORTH VIETNAM.

THE CHIEF DELEGATES TO THE FPJMT FROM THE UNITED STATES, SOUTH
VIETNAM, NORTH VIETNAM AND THE PRG, ACCOMPANIED BY STAFF
ASSISTANTS, DEPARTED SAIGON AT 0625 HOURS (SAIGON TIME) ABOARD
A UNITED STATES AIR FORCE -130. THE AIRCRAFT ARRIVED AT GIA
LAM AIRPORT AT 0950 HOURS (SAIGON TIME).

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FOLLOWING A PRELIMINARY MEETING, THE GROUP VISITED THE VAN DIEN CEMETERY, A MUNICIPAL CEMETERY APPROXIMATELY 15 KM FROM THE AIRPORT. THE ALLEGED INITIAL GRAVE SITES OF 23 AMERICANS WERE POINTED OUT IN SIX SEPARATE LOCATIONS IN THE CEMETERY.

THE REMAINS OF ALL BUT THREE HAD BEEN TRANSFERRED " IN ACCORDANCE WITH LOCAL TRADITION" TO ANOTHER LOCATION APPROXIMATELY 60 KM FROM HANOI. THE THREE GRAVES WHICH ALLEGEDLY STILL HAD REMAINS INTACT WERE MARKED BY A SMALL STONE MARKER INDICATING THE VIETNAMESE COUNTERPART OF THE NAME AND THE DATE OF DEATH. THE MARKERS WERE APPROXIMATELY 12 INCHES WIDE AND PROTRUDED ABOUT 18 INCHES ABOVE GROUND.

COLONEL B. H. RUSSELL, CHIEF US DELEGATE TO THE FPJMT, ASKED TO VISIT THE MORE DISTANT BURIAL LOCATION TODAY, BUT WAS TOLD IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE BECUASE OF THE TIME INVOLVED FOR TRAVEL. AFTER A LUNCHEON, HOSTED BY THE DRV REPRESENTATIVES, THE GROUP RETURNED TO GIA LAM AIRPORT FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS. COLONEL RUSSELL PRESENTED A SERIES OF SPECIFIC QUESTIONS DESIGNED TO EXPEDITE THE RETURN OF THE AMERICANS WHO HAD DIED IN CAPTIVITY AS WELL AS ANY OTHER AMERICANS BURIED IN NORTH VIETNAM. THE DRV SPOKESMAN INDICATED THEY WOULD NOT DISCUSS PROCEDURAL MATTERS TODAY BUT WOULD BE READY TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC PROCEDURES AND MAKE ARRANGMENTS AT AN EARLY MEETING OF THE FPJMT IN SAIGON.

THE MEMBERS OF THE FPJMT DEPARTED HANOI AT 1650 HOURS (SAIGON TIME) ARRIVING AT SAIGON AT 2005 HOURS (SAIGON TIME).
END TEXT.

WHITEHOUSE

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NMAFVVZCZ

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*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

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TAGS: MOPS
To: BANGKOK
CDR JCRC RTAFB THAI
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